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editorials

The CIA's Chief

The Senate has confirmed President Carter's nomination of his old Naval Academy classmate, Adm. Stansfield Turner, to be director of the scandal-ridden Central Intelligence Agency. His assignment is to bring the agency under control. That is, as the President has charged him, to conduct its activities "strictly in accordance with the law and with American values."

That may take some doing given the habit of abuse of power and outright lawbreaking that has taken root at the CIA over the years. But it can be done and it must be done.

We have no reason to suspect that the new boss at the CIA is not up to the job. Indeed, he has pledged that he would resign rather than carry out any activities he considered immoral or illegal, even if ordered to do so by the President; and that is encouraging. But the country needs to know that someone is watching the CIA. And that is an accountability the President cannot delegate.